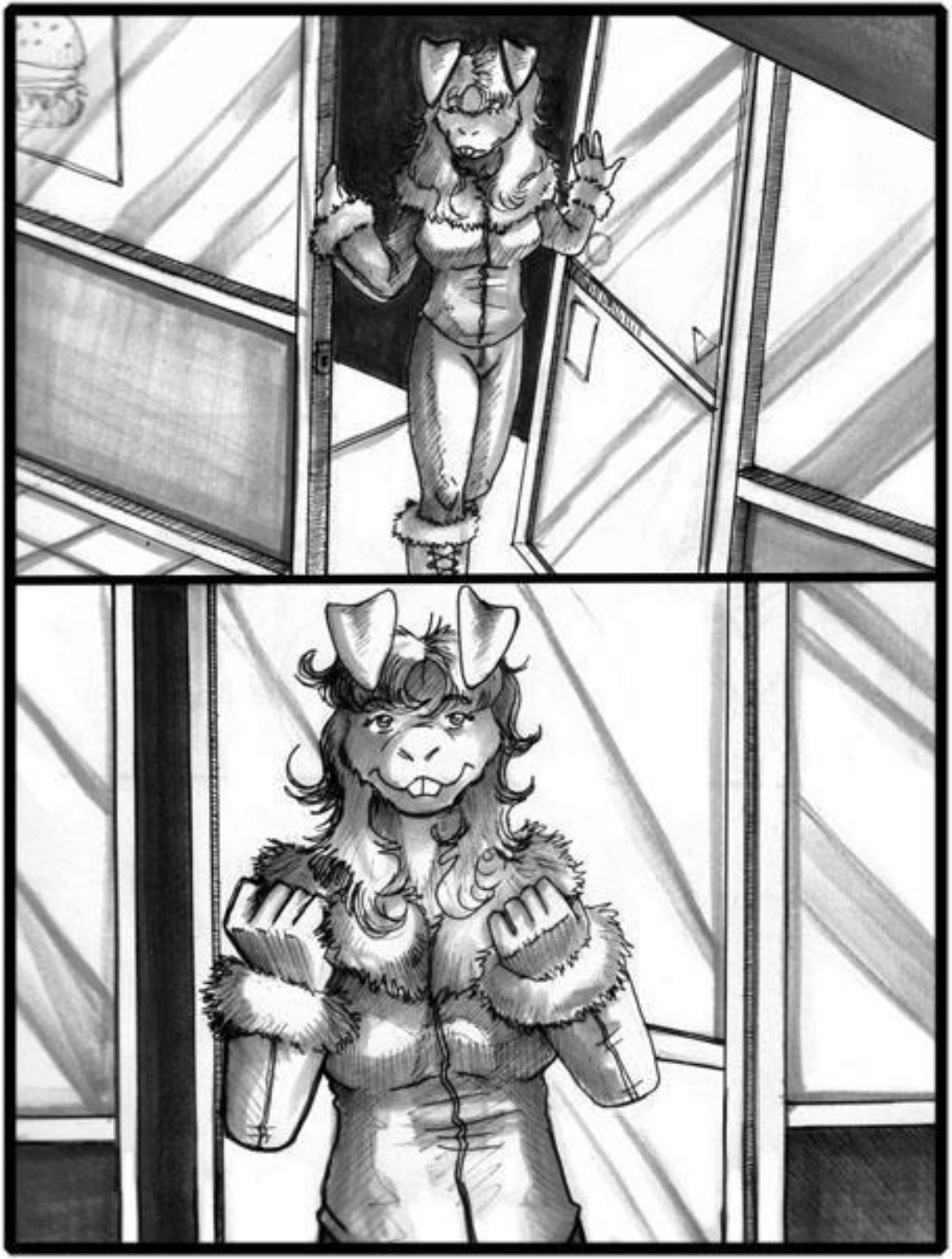
Don't Tell Me
-Madonna-

SO, HAVE YOU WRITTEN ANYTHING GOOD YET?
WELL, THERE IS THIS ONE LINE, BUT I THINK IT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE.
"LAST NIGHT, I DREAMT OF GUACAMORA, AGAIN..."
WHAT?
YEAH, SOUNDS NICE, THOUGH I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT EXACTLY IT MEANS.
SO THE WRITER DOESN'T KNOW HIS OWN WORK?
NOT AT ALL, I AM MORE OF A HISTORIAN. I SET UP THE CHARACTERS AND THE SETTING AND THE EVENTS, AND LET THEM DO THE WORK. IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD OF COURSE, BUT THE ONLY THING THAT I DO IS PUT DOWN ON PAPER HOW EVERYTHING DEVELOPS.

THAT SEEMS LIKE A VERY ODD APPROACH TO WRITING. DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE YOU SHOULD HAVE MORE CONTROL OVER YOUR OWN CHARACTERS?
NOT REALLY. BECAUSE THEN THEY DON'T FEEL ALIVE.
IF I "WROTE" THEM HOWEVER I WANTED THEM TO BE, THEY WOULD FEEL FLAT.
SO INSTEAD THEY ARE HAPHAZARD? RUNNING AROUND DOING WHATEVER THEY PLEASE? NOT VERY ORGANIZED.
YEAH, BUT DOES ORGANIZATION MAKE FOR A GOOD STORY?
SOMETIMES, ACTUALLY A LOT OF TIMES, YOU GET INTO SITUATIONS WHERE YOU KNOW THAT A CHARACTER WILL MAKE A CHOICE, AND YOU CAN SEE WHERE THIS IS GOING TO LEAD, AND KNOW FULL WELL THAT IT'S NOT GOING IN ANY DIRECTION THAT YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO. AS A PERSON, AND A WRITER, YOU WANT TO CHANGE IT, YOU WANT HER TO PUT DOWN THE BOTTLE AND NOT DRINK THE POISON, BECAUSE YOU AS THE WRITER WOULD NOT DO THAT YOURSELF. BUT THEN AGAIN THAT CHOICE IS NOT UP TO YOU, IT IS THEIRS.

HAHAHAHA
I GUESS THERE IS SOME TRUTH TO THAT. I CAN THINK OF SEVERAL BOOKS OF GAY CHARACTERS WHERE YOU KNOW THAT IN THE PLACE AND TIME THAT THEY ARE IN, IT'S NOT THE BRIGHTEST IDEA TO "COME OUT".
WELL THAT IS AN INTERESTING POINT. SINCE I COULD ARGUE THAT THE BOOK THEN SERVES THE ROLE OF AN OUTLET FOR THE WRITER.
IN ANY CASE, MOST OF THOSE STORIES ARE USUALLY INTERESTING BECAUSE OF THE HARD DECISIONS THAT THE CHARACTERS MAKE.

THIS MAKES ME WONDER ABOUT THE VERY PEOPLE THAT I SEE EVERY DAY. I WONDER HOW MUCH OF THEIR LIFE IS INFLUENCED BY THE SETTINGS THAT THEY ARE IN.
I HAVE NEVER BEEN A RELIGIOUS PERSON, BUT THE THOUGHT OF AN INEFFABLE BEING, SITTING UP THERE, JUST WAITING TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS... WELL, IT KIND OF MAKES ME LAUGH. IT SOUNDS SILLY.
DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT I AM TRYING TO IMAGINE OUR VERY LIVES, AS A STORY, AND HAVE GOD TAKE AND APPROACH TO WRITING MUCH LIKE YOURS.
THAT IS INTERESTING. SO, WHAT DO YOU SEE?
ON THE ONE HAND, IT'S A VERY REFRESHING THOUGHT TO KNOW THAT I AM IN CONTROL OF MY OWN STORY, THAT I HAVE BEEN GIVEN FREE WILL IN THIS STAGE AND LEFT TO DEAL WITH THE EVENTS THAT UNFOLD AROUND ME. I CAN'T PREVENT EARTHQUAKES, BUT I AM STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR MY BILLS.
ON THE OTHER HAND, I AM A LITTLE BIT AFRAID THAT I MIGHT SCREW IT UP. BECAUSE THEN I CAN'T BLAME ANYONE BUT MYSELF.
AND THIRD, IT MAKES ME FEEL KIND OF USED TO BE A PART OF SOMEONE ELSE'S ENTERTAINMENT. YOU KNOW? CONSTANTLY BEING WATCHED BY AN OMNISCIENT PEEPING-TOM.

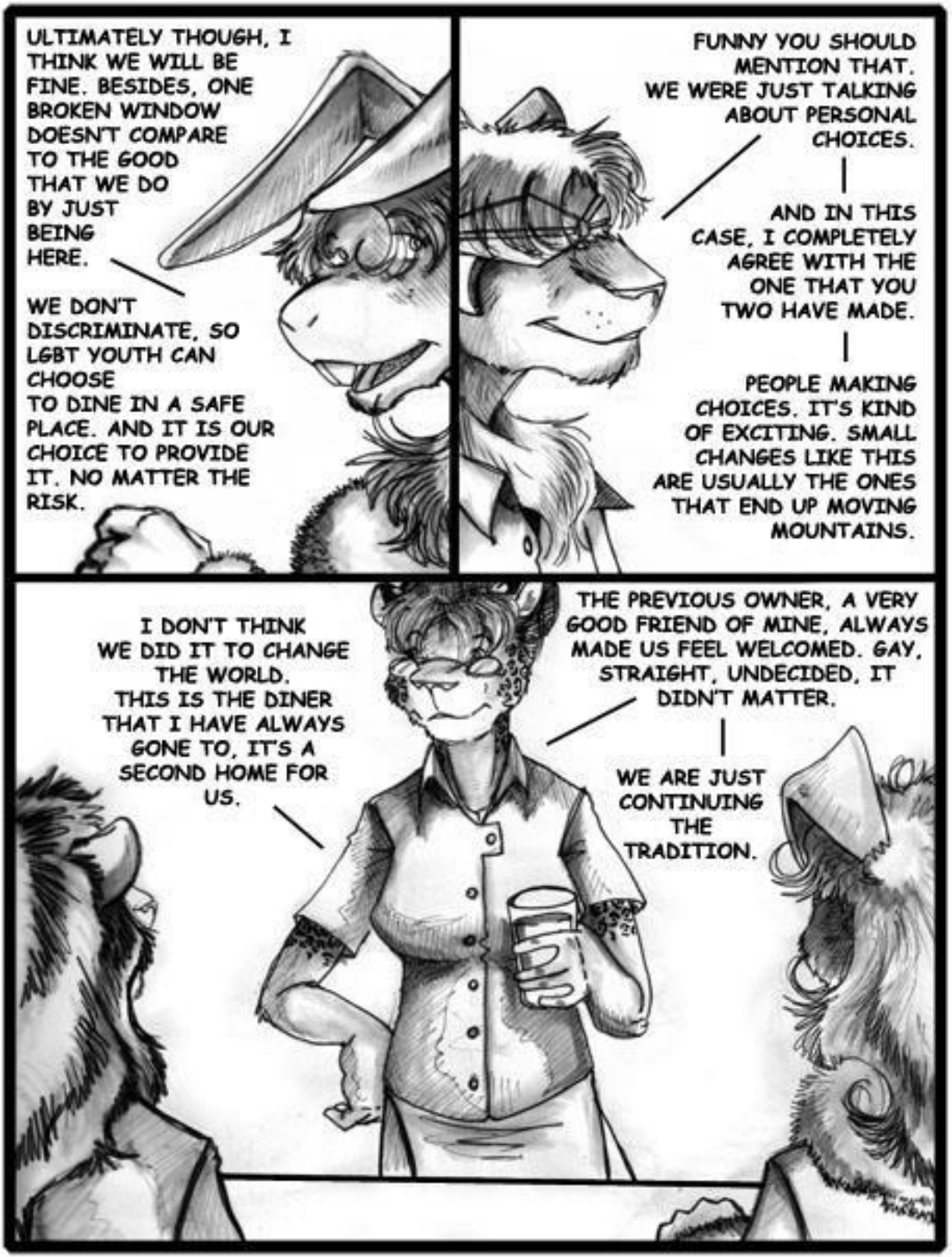


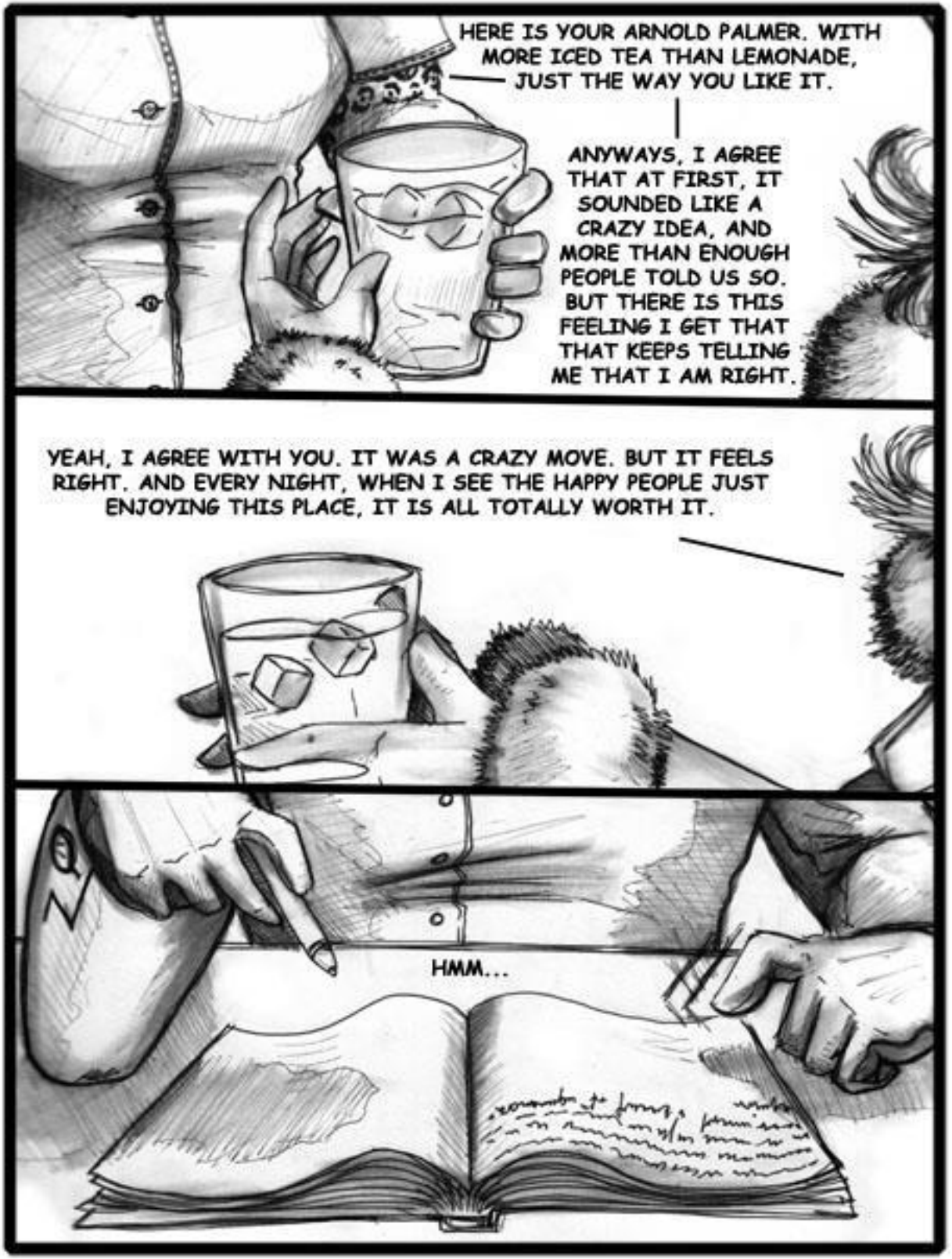
WELL, THIS DAY JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER.
HI HON. WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE AT THIS TIME?
ARE THEY NOT KEEPING YOU BUSY ENOUGH AT WORK?
HEY THERE, I HAVE SOME FREE TIME. WITH THE ECONOMY THE WAY IT IS, WE DON'T SEE MANY PEOPLE AT THIS DAY OF THE WEEK.
SO I THOUGHT I SHOULD DROP BY.
BESIDES, THE FOOD IS BETTER HERE THAN ANY JOIN IN THAT AREA.

ALSO, THE SERVICE HERE IS MUCH BETTER. AND THE STAFF IS BETTER LOOKING.
SO, HOW HAS YOUR DAY BEEN COMING ALONG?
SO FAR SO GOOD. WE HAVE HAD A STEADY TRICKLING OF CUSTOMERS. NOT TOO BUSY, BUT BUSY ENOUGH.
FOR THE MOST PART, I HAVE BEEN CHATTING IT UP WITH MY FRIEND HERE. LOUIS, THIS IS MY FRIEND-FRIEND THIS IS MY MATE LOUIS.
IT'S A PLEASURE.
FORGIVE ME, BUT WHAT IS YOUR NAME OLD MAN?

WELL THAT IS A VERY GOOD QUESTION. THE FUNNY THING IS THAT MOST PEOPLE I MEET, END UP CALLING ME JUST THAT, "OLD MAN".
I DON'T KNOW WHY IT STUCK, OR HOW MOST PEOPLE COME TO THE SAME NICKNAME, BUT IT WORKS.
HOWEVER, IF YOU MUST PUT A NAME TO THE FACE, I WILL NOT OBJECT.
SO, LET ME ADD THAT YOU MAY CALL ME "OJIISAN" AND I AM DELIGHTED TO MEET YOU.
SO, I HAVE SOME REALLY INTERESTING NEWS TO TELL YOU.
I WAS SITTING AROUND AT THE LGBT CENTER EARLIER WHEN I HEARD A COUPLE OF PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT THIS PLACE.

APARENTLY, OUR LITTLE DINER HAS STARTED TO GET A REPUTATION AS AN LGBT HANGOUT SPOT.
OUTSIDE OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, THERE AREN'T MANY.
OH REALLY?
I WILL AGREE THAT THIS CITY SEEMS VERY DIVIDED IN THAT WAY. THERE ARE SEVERAL SPOTS IN THE CITY THAT ARE FRIENDLY, AND THERE ARE A LOT OF PIECES THAT ARE NOT.
I HAVE NOTICED THAT INDEED, LIKE YOU MENTIONED, THERE ARE NOT A LOT OF "GAY" ESTABLISHMENTS OUTSIDE WE-HO. BUT, IS IT REALLY SUCH A GOOD IDEA TO START EARNING THAT KIND OF A REPUTATION?
OUTSIDE OF THAT AREA I MEAN?
ARE YOU NOT CONCERNED THAT IT MIGHT MAKE YOU A TARGET FOR A BROKEN WINDOW?
YOU KNOW, I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.
HMM...
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT WOULD. I'M NOT AFRAID OF THE OLDER GENERATION. IN THIS AREA THEY DON'T SEEM TO CARE. WE MIGHT GET SOME TROUBLE FROM KIDS THOUGH. THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO SCHOOLS NEARBY.


ULTIMATELY THOUGH, I THINK WE WILL BE FINE. BESIDES, ONE BROKEN WINDOW DOESN'T COMPARE TO THE GOOD THAT WE DO BY JUST BEING HERE.
WE DON'T DISCRIMINATE, SO LGBT YOUTH CAN CHOOSE TO DINE IN A SAFE PLACE. AND IT IS OUR CHOICE TO PROVIDE IT. NO MATTER THE RISK.
FUNNY YOU SHOULD MENTION THAT. WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT PERSONAL CHOICES.
AND IN THIS CASE, I COMPLETELY AGREE WITH THE ONE THAT YOU TWO HAVE MADE.
PEOPLE MAKING CHOICES. IT'S KIND OF EXCITING. SMALL CHANGES LIKE THIS ARE USUALLY THE ONES THAT END UP MOVING MOUNTAINS.
I DON'T THINK WE DID IT TO CHANGE THE WORLD. THIS IS THE DINER THAT I HAVE ALWAYS GONE TO, IT'S A SECOND HOME FOR US.
THE PREVIOUS OWNER, A VERY GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, ALWAYS MADE US FEEL WELCOMED. GAY, STRAIGHT, UNDECIDED, IT DIDN'T MATTER.
WE ARE JUST CONTINUING THE TRADITION.


HERE IS YOUR ARNOLD PALMER. WITH MORE ICED TEA THAN LEMONADE, JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT.
ANYWAYS, I AGREE THAT AT FIRST, IT SOUNDED LIKE A CRAZY IDEA, AND MORE THAN ENOUGH PEOPLE TOLD US SO. BUT THERE IS THIS FEELING I GET THAT THAT KEEPS TELLING ME THAT I AM RIGHT.
YEAH, I AGREE WITH YOU. IT WAS A CRAZY MOVE. BUT IT FEELS RIGHT. AND EVERY NIGHT, WHEN I SEE THE HAPPY PEOPLE JUST ENJOYING THIS PLACE, IT IS ALL TOTALLY WORTH IT.
HMM...

WELL, PERSONALLY I JUST CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HOW THINGS PLAY OUT. THERE IS, AFTER ALL, NO POINT IN TRYING TO GUESS THE FUTURE. SO, ALL WE CAN DO, IS WAIT AND SEE.
AND WRITE, IN MY CASE.
AND FOR TODAY, I THINK I AM DONE WITH THAT.
SO, I'M GOING TO BID YOU LADIES ADIEU. I HAVE ERRANDS TO RUN.

MISS ROSE, MISS LOUIS, IT HAS TRULY BEEN A PLEASURE.
AND I HAVE TO CONFESS, THIS HAS BECOME ONE OF MY FAVORITE PLACES TO SIT DOWN AND THINK.
EVEN THOUGH WE DIDN'T TALK MUCH, THE FEELING IS MUTUAL.
PLUS THE COFFEE IS FANTASTIC.
SAY HELLO TO THE REST OF THE GANG FOR ME.
OH, AND MISS ROSE, HE MIGHT BE A PEEPING TOM, BUT I DOUBT IT'S BECAUSE OF AMUSEMENT, OR ANYTHING LESS THAN SHEER CURIOSITY.
GOOD DAY LADIES.

WHAT AN INTERESTING FELLOW, THAT OJIISAN. DOES HE KNOW ANY OF THE OTHER GUYS?
I DON'T KNOW.
I HOPE THAT WE DON'T KEEP ATTRACTING STRANGE PEOPLE LIKE HIM.
I DON'T THINK HE'S THAT STRANGE. HE IS GOOD AT CONVERSATIONS. USUALLY SHOWS UP WHEN THERE IS ALMOST NO ONE HERE.
AND HE IS AN AMAZING TIPPER. HE ORDERED FRIES AND COFFEE AND LEFT A TWENTY. HE ALWAYS DOES THAT.
HOW MANY TIMES HAS HE BEEN HERE BEFORE?
SIX OR SEVEN. THE FUNNY PART, IS THAT I GET THIS FEELING THAT I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN HIM.
AND I ALSO GET THE FEELING THAT WE ARE GOING TO BE JUST FINE. GOOD TIMES ARE COMING.